



**Connecticut Department of Public Health**

**Testimony Presented Before the Committee on Public Health  
February 23, 2015**

**Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA  
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**Senate Bill # 855 - An Act Concerning Reports of Nurse Staffing Levels**

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information regarding Senate Bill 855.

SB 855 mandates each hospital to report to DPH on an annual basis a nursing plan to ensure the nurse staffing plan is sufficient to provide adequate and appropriate delivery of health care services. During the course of the Department's inspection activities in all DPH licensed healthcare settings, staffing is monitored to ensure that adequate staff is available to meet the acuity needs of the patients. It may be difficult for hospitals to develop a plan with registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, and nurse assistant ratios as the hospital environment of care is very fluid and acuity and staffing patterns must be adjusted on a shift to shift basis, in order to meet patient needs.

Additionally, while staffing plans are submitted to the Department annually, the adequacy of staffing is better assessed during onsite visits and observations of care; therefore, there is not much utility in this required reporting. It is not within the purview of the Department to assess the effectiveness of hospital staffing plans but rather to ensure that staffing is adequate to meet the needs of the patient.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.